

**Town of Westford
Joint Finance Committee / Selectmen Meeting
J.V. Fletcher Library
March 4, 2008**

Present: Dave Murray, Kelly Ross, Tom Price, Jeanne Drula, Al Herget, Ingrid Nilsson, Suzanne Marchand

Absent: Michael Princi, Alicia Corvino, Rose O'Donnell

7:30 PM Call to Order

Selectmen Present are Valerie Wormell, Jim Sullivan, Dini Healy-Coffin, Nancy Rosinski, and Bob Jefferies.

Discussion – Options Regarding Town Hall

Khumalo and Marchand gave a presentation presenting their findings regarding the RFP sent out (Option A), and the use of town buildings to house displaced Town Hall employees (Option B).

Option A includes three options for obtaining a building to serve as the Town Hall; RFP to lease, lease to purchase, and purchase. Proposals were received for properties at 515 Groton Road, 3 Lan Drive, 4 Lan Drive, 334 Littleton Road, and 5 Lyberty way. 515 Groton Road is the cheapest option to buy at \$4,000,000. With a twenty year bond and rental income coming in from existing tenants, the building would cost \$205,775 in Fiscal Year 2009.

Option B provided a detailed plan using existing Town buildings. John Livsey, Town Engineer, gave the presentation showing in detail where each department would go. The Millennium School will be retrofitted to house the Town Manger's office, Accounting, Finance, Human Resources, the Town Clerk, Tax Collection, Assessors, and the Board of Health. The Permitting Departments will move to the Rogers Fire Station. The estimated cost for moving the offices will be \$217,000, which does not include furniture

costs. An additional \$56,000 will also be needed for temporary storage for the remaining Town Hall basement files. About half of the cost will be for the trailers, and the other half will be for fire proof file cabinets.

Khumalo noted that the Millennium retrofit needs to be a long-term solution of at least ten years for it to be worth the cost. Also, a request will be submitted to the Community Preservation Committee to request \$18,000 for a structural analysis and future use study for Town Hall.

Jefferies noted that fixing Town Hall may take anywhere from four to five months to four to five years. Also, the Millennium plan does not accommodate new growth in town.

Bill Olsen said that using the Millennium is a stop-gap measure and should not be a permanent solution.

Marchand noted that the financing for the move will be appropriated at the May Annual Town Meeting.

One person asked where Town employees and tax payers will be able to park when the Apple Blossom Festival is at the Abbot School during the first weekend of May. Taxes are due on May 1, 2008. Olsen responded that the employees will be parking on the field adjacent to Fisher Way.

Ross asked if it was possible to use the \$400,000 earmarked for the Town Hall restoration to begin work there and also make repairs at the Millennium School. The roof of the Millennium School is leaking and needs work done. Ross also suggested asking the Community Preservation Committee for funds to repair the Town Hall.

10:15 – The Selectmen voted to eliminate Option A. The Selectmen then voted to approve Plan B.

10:20 – The Finance Committee lost a quorum.

Reserve Fund Balance FY08: \$89,510.25

Signed, Dave Murray
Finance Committee Chairman

Date